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DEPT FOR AF/W AND H  
DEPT PLEASE PASS USCIRF FOR DAVID DETTONI

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [OTRA](#) [ASEC](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [KIRF](#) [NI](#)  
SUBJECT: MISSION NIGERIA WELCOMES USCIRF DELEGATION TO  
ABUJA MARCH 19 TO APRIL 3, 2009

REF: STATE 20346

¶1. U.S. Mission Nigeria warmly welcomes the visit of U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) Commissioners Donald Argue, Talal Eid, Leonard Leo, and Chair Felice Gaer, Executive Director James Standish, and USCIRF staff members David Dettoni and Tiffany Lynch to Abuja, Nigeria from March 19 to April 3, 2009. Embassy Abuja will work to schedule requested meetings. The Mission looks forward to greeting the delegation upon its arrival.

¶2. Control Officer for the visit is Terry Pflaumer.  
Contact information is:  
234-9-461-4228 (OFFICE)  
234-803-665-1250 (CELL)  
PflaumerWN/at/state.gov

Deputy Control Officer is Cheryl Fernandes.  
Contact information is:  
234-9-461-4219 (OFFICE)  
234-803-665-1166 (CELL)  
FernandesCL/at/state.gov

Administrative Point of Contact for the visit is John Heinbeck:  
234-9-461-4157 (OFFICE)  
234-803-408-0949 (CELL)  
HeinbeckJC/at/state.gov

¶3. The Embassy has reserved rooms at the Transcorp Hilton Hotel Abuja for the Abuja portions of the delegation's stay. Breakfast is not/not included. The hotel address is: 1 Aguiyi Ironsi Street, Maitama, Abuja, Nigeria; phone number is 234-9-461-3000 and fax number is 234-9-461-3110. Reservations will be made for accommodations during travel outside of Abuja and will be sent directly to delegation staff members.

¶4. Nigeria is almost exclusively a cash-based economy. The Mission strongly discourages the use of credit cards anywhere in Nigeria. Visitors should carry travelers' checks and cash, but should be aware that travelers' checks are often impossible to cash outside of large hotels in Abuja.

¶5. Please note that visas are required for entry into Nigeria and must be obtained prior to traveling. Airport visas are not available.

¶6. SECURITY: There is no specific terrorist threat against American citizens or American interests in Nigeria. Rather, the main threat to U.S. citizens and U.S. interests is mostly criminal based upon prevailing economic conditions. Violent crime is endemic throughout the country. Armed street robberies, carjackings, sexual assaults, residential burglaries and credit card fraud threaten every person in the country, foreigners and Nigerians alike. U.S. citizens and

official travelers have not been singled out, but they are generally perceived to be affluent and are subject to the same threat as all other persons in Nigeria. There have also been incidents of violent communal unrest outside Abuja and Lagos during the past several months, and innocent bystanders have suffered. RSO has determined that most violent crimes around Abuja take place between the hours of 2300 - 0600.

¶7. MEDICAL: Malaria prophylaxis should be started one week before arrival, continued through the length of stay and at least four weeks after departure. Visitors must ensure that their immunizations are up-to-date and carry their entire yellow book shot record with them. Avian influenza is present in Nigeria among birds.

¶8. Further information on travel in Nigeria is available at the following State Department website:  
[http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/cis/cis\\_987.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_987.html)

¶9. SCHEDULE: Embassy Abuja proposes the schedule below, based on information provided by USCIRF staff. As previously discussed with USCIRF staff, at present, U.S. Mission travel to Jos and Bauchi is restricted following outbreaks of interreligious violence. The Embassy's Emergency Action Committee (EAC) is scheduled to review this policy on March 12. Per discussions, Embassy is pursuing the possibility of a reception on March 23 in Abuja. We understand reception-related charges may be billed to the fund cite provided in reftel.

Proposed Schedule:

19 March: Argue, Dettoni and Lynch arrive on Lufthansa 562  
20 March: meetings in Abuja  
  
21 March: Eid arrives on KLM 577  
22 March: Gaer, Leo and Standish arrive on Lufthansa 562  
23 March: meetings in Abuja  
24 March: morning - meetings in Abuja  
          late morning - depart for Kaduna  
          afternoon - meetings in Kaduna  
25 March: morning - meetings in Kaduna  
          mid-day - depart for Kano  
          late afternoon - meetings in Kano  
26 March: meetings in Kano  
          Argue, Leo, Eid and Standish depart Kano at 11:45pm  
on KLM 577  
27 March: Gaer, Dettoni, and Lynch depart for Abuja (arriving late afternoon)  
28 March: meetings in Abuja  
29 March-3 April: meetings in Abuja (Gaer departure date to be confirmed)  
3 April: Dettoni and Lynch depart Abuja on Lufthansa 563

Alternative schedule (if travel to Jos is authorized by EAC)  
29 March: afternoon - Gaer, Dettoni, and Lynch depart for Jos  
30 March: meetings in Jos  
31 March: morning - depart for Bauchi  
          mid-day - meetings in Bauchi  
1 April: depart for Abuja (arriving late afternoon)  
2 April: meetings in Abuja  
3 April: meetings in Abuja  
          Gaer, Dettoni, and Lynch depart on Lufthansa 563  
(Gaer departure date to be confirmed)  
SANDERS